A REAPPRAISAL OF SHORT STORY WRITERS OF NATIONALISTIC ERA IN INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

Literature has been a reflection of the human society over centuries. It has been the most powerful medium of provoking human emotions and thoughts. Readers laugh at their hearts out over comedies, readers burst into tears over tragedies, readers get enthused by stirring social realities and some literature that simply transport readers to the world of beauty and good feelings. Literature gives readers an opportunity to indulge in lives and lifestyles of people never known and who aren't of contemporary times. It sneaks into the mix of their life, their social set up, value system, culture, creed, nature, behaviour, attitude and life conditions. Literature doesn't belong to a place, it doesn't belong to a person; it is universal. Indian English literature finds its roots in the rich Indian culture.

India has been a land of stories and fables. While earlier Indian literature comprised of epics, religious writings, poetry, etc., in Hindi and other regional languages, Indian English literature came into existence with the arrival of the British in India. It was the presence of the British that influenced Indians to breed their own English Literature and that gave Indian English fiction its real existence.

The writer is profoundly influenced by contemporary age. This is the universal fact. Some writers are seemingly unaffected by the age, but undercurrent of his age silently flows in his writings. Some vehemently react to the issues of their times and contribute their might to the flow of the times. Some writers are critical of their times and sow the seeds of change. One or the other way, the writer is influenced by his times that emerges in his writings. This is pertinent in a way more prominent in fiction.

In this study, the researcher has chosen some of the prominent short story writers of nationalistic period in Indian writing English. Apart from the three great writers of fiction R K Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao, the researcher has been taken up the detailed study of Bhabhani Bhattacharya also. These writers have reacted in their own way to the tumultuous period of Indian history that is struggle for independence. R K Narayan seems to be unaffected, Mulk Raj Anand overtly supported the cause and Raja Rao's sensible reaction brings various hues of reaction and proaction. Gandhi and his ideology is the back drop of this struggle for Indian Independence, so that his presence in various ways in the writings of these writers is quintessence. Gandhiji's concern for social change, untouchability, swadeshi, the Indian caste system, class system, religion, education and status of women, the theme of hunger and poverty, India's struggle for Independence form the subject matter of one or the other short stories of these writers.

Their writing career was exceptionally long encompassing seven decades. Their literary output is rich and varied. Novels, short stories, memoires, travelogues and newspaper columns are part of it. Taken together their writings provide us a glimpse of their fascinating world and reveal the ways in which Narayan, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya transformed small and ordinary experiences of life into delightful memorable stories.

In the recent times numerous critical works have appeared on the novels of these writers, but compared to it, satisfactory attention has not been given to their stories. The present study

seeks to give a comprehensive and in depth appreciation of the thematic and technical characteristics of these writers in reference to the tumultuous times of Indian Independence struggle. It attempts to bring out the richness and density of the thought content, the narrative technique, the art of characterization, language and style and the distinct Indian scenario revealed in its depth. As a critical evaluation of the short fiction of these writers, this thesis tries to define the nature of their achievement as a story teller in relation to their times.

For the preparation of the synopsis, a few short stories collections of these writers have been considered. R K Narayan's An Astrologers Day, Lawley Road, A Horse and Two Goats, Cyclone and Other Stories are taken into consideration. Raja Rao's The Cow of the Barricades and The Policeman and the Rose are considered. Mulk Raj Anand's The Lost Child and Other Stories, The Barbers Trade Union, Lajwanti and Other Stories, between Tears and Laughter, The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories, The Power of Darkness and Other Stories are taken up for the study. Bhabani Bhattacharya's Indian Cavalcade and Steel Hawk and Other Stories form the part of the study. These short stories reveal their varied interests and their negotiations with their times.

HYPOTHESIS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.1) **HYPOTHESES**

An in depth study of R. K Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand,Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya was done on thematic, structural and philosophical level. It reveals interesting findings as posted in the following Hypotheses:

A) R. K Narayan

1. The structures of R. K Narayan's plots are governed by the particular setting that he has used.
2. The thematic works of R. K Narayan's short stories are integrated with the elements of setting in their short stories.
3. The characters presented by R.K.Narayan's short stories are products of the setting of their short stories.
4. R. K Narayan's world view is deeply steeped in Indian culture.

B) Mulk Raj Anand

Indian women characters of Anand's short stories with the special reference to

1. To probe deep into economic backwardness of women.
2. To correlate the illiteracy level of women characters to their suffering.
3. To analyse the gender bias in the society.
4. To study the development of women from Pre-independence to Post-independence period.
5. To trace the racial issues due to colonization and its impact on innocent women.

C) RAJA RAO

1. Raja Rao stories reveal the woes and sufferings of the village folk as much as to expose the social evils and idiosyncrasies, oddities and weaknesses of human character.
2. His stories highlight the class signification of social, moral realism, political Resurgence and stories of metaphysical symbolism.
3. Raja Rao stories are descriptive narrations and naturalistic dialogues keep his stories bound to a realistic plane.

D) BHABANI BHATTACHARYA

1. Bhabani Bhattacharya's stories gives close attention to the social political and historical processes, which marks his personal background.
2. Bhabani Bhattacharya's stories reveal the stories of poverty, religion, social and personal relationship.

1.2) Objectives

1. The short story of the Indian writers R.K.Narayan, MulkRaj, Anand RajaRao, and Bhabani Bhattacharya stories highlights the spirit of place reflecting the customs and attitudes of the community.
2. The Indian English Short Story writer R.K.Narayan, MulkRaj Anand RajaRao, and Bhabani Bhattacharya's stories highlight the context of psychological, religious, moral, social , political resurgence emotional milieu, metaphysical symbolism and a realistic fantacy.
3. To present setting is symbolically microcosm of a macrocosm.
4. The short stories of R.K.Narayan, MulkRaj Anand RajaRao, andBhabani Bhattacharya's are an active force influencing the course of the events and destiny of the characters.

2) Review of literature of short story writers

a) R. K. NARAYAN'S LITERARY REVIEW :

1. M.K.Naik in his book *The Ironic Vision*: A Study of the Fiction of R.K.Narayan, focused on the close examination of the regional element in Narayan's fiction and relationship with his ironic vision.
2. Veena Mohod's *Social Realism in R.K. Narayan's Novels*, shows that his realism is an expression of his essential humanism and that Narayan's success as a social realist is epitomized in his creation of Malgudi where man realizes the wholeness of existence, his place in the infinite.
3. Jayant K. Biswal's *A Critical Study of the Novels of R. K. Narayan: The Malgudi Comedy* has explored the immense possibilities of the comic in the common place.
4. Sharan Nagendranath's book *A critical study of novels of R. K. Narayan* is quite helpful to the readers to study and understand R. K. Narayan's novels in detail from '*Swami and Friends'* to *'The Talkative Man'* as it discusses Narayan's technique, themes, form and meaning.

5. In '*R.K.Narayan: Critical Appreciation'*, by William Walsh emphasizes locale, Malgudi. He underlines influence of Malgudi milieu on plot, theme, and characters.
6. David Lodge describes in, '*The Modes of Modern Writings.'* Narayan' protagonists, which are comparable to humours, but in Narayan, this approach elevates his comedies into myth.
7. *'R.K. Narayan: Breaking the Borderline*,' by R. Ramchandra occurs in part four of the book '*Aspect of World Literature',* edited by P. Bayapa Reddy in which the theme of renunciation, seeking "retirement" from life as an escape and fulfilment and other themes are referred in passing.
8. R.K.Narayan's works of novels, short stories, essays, travel pieces are included in one volume in *Malgudi Landscapes,* skillfully the main focus of the editor on the locale Malgudi, the enchanting little South Indian town that R.K.Narayan created over half a century, to glorious and colourful life.
9. The twenty six insightful essays in a volume '*Indian Legendary Writers inEnglish': Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao* edited by Jagadeep Sarangi sheds a new light on the three legendary writers.
10. *An Anthology of Recent Criticism* by C.N.Srinath is a collection of delightful essays on R. K. Narayan which concentrates on Narayan's 'barely sufficient resource' and 'restrained art', his 'entangled irony' and an 'irregular humour.'

B) MULKRAJ ANAND'S LITERARY REVIEW:

1. In Lajwanti, Mulk Raj Anand focuses on a woman's predicament and struggle to find an identity for herself. Frustrated by a rigid pattern of social relationships, gender bias, religious bigotry and her own petty human foibles, her abject condition serves as a metaphor for sacrifice and servility which forms the thematic heart of these stories.
2. "With great deftness, Anand pictures India...He impresses with his profound knowledge of Indian religion and culture." — Books Abroad, USA.
3. "Mr. Anand has a marvelous power of evoking an immense varied life...Anand's picture is real, comprehensive, and subtle, and the shifts in moods, from farce to comedy, from pathos to tragedy, and from the realistic to the poetic, are remarkable." — V S Pritchett, British Literary Critic.
4. "Anand's historic importance has been established, he stands out as the most wide-ranging and prolific...a figure of towering humanity, whose works guide us through the multitudinous complexity of India with more verve than any other writer of his time." — Alistair Niven, the Hindu.

C) RAJA RAO'S LITERARY REVIEW:

1. Piciucco, Pier Paollo, Ed. A Companion to Indian Fiction in English. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2011. Print. A companion to Indian fiction in English is a compilation and analysis of the works of major Indian authors who write in English and were born in India. Some of the writer's discussed in it are R. K. Narayan, Mulk RajAnand, Raja Rao, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, etc. The companion reflects current trends in terms of material discussed and also in the choice if issues analysed, mirroring, and the focus of interest of present day studies. The companion has an innovative section, dedicated to synopses of novels, planned to allow readers to immediately place the

authors analysed within the panorama of Indian literature in English. The book is useful for my research as it discusses Raja Rao's magic wand of creativity, power of description, art of characterization, setting, themes like East-West encounter, Gandhian philosophy in his major

2. Raja Rao, M. Subba. Readings in Indo-Anglian Literature: Prospective and Retrospective. Delhi:KanishkaPublications, 1995. Print. The book contains many articles on Raja Rao and his contemporaries. The article "Raja Rao-The Path breaker" is useful for my research as it discusses universality of his themes by parading the historical or mythological together and also discusses the linguistic device and symbolism used by Raja Rao in his major works.
3. Prasad Amaranth, Kanupriya, eds. Indian Writing in English Tradition and Modernity. New Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2010. Print. Tradition and Modernity is a collection of scholarly articles and research papers contributed by different scholars hailing from the different parts of the country. It critically evaluates the various aspects of Indian Writing in English. Some of the papers are also related to the different trends of Indian Writing in English. It covers the following authors: R. N. Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, U. R. Ananth Murthy, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Arun Joshi, kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Manju Kapur, Nirad C. Choudhary, Missim Ezekiel, Vijay Tendulkar, Grish Karnad, Mahesh Dattani and B. S. Naikar. All the articles of this book have been so judiciously selected that they may certainly, as it is hoped, cater to the need of all types of readers - students, teachers and those research scholars who want to be acquainted with the writers of both modernity and tradition in Indian Writing in English. This book helps me to study in detail the Gandhian ideology like self-purification, Hindu-Muslim unity, truth, non-violence in the works of Raja Rao.

D) **BHABANI BHATTACHARYA'S LITERARY REVIEW:**

Bhattacharya is described as belonging to the social realism school of Indo-Anglian literature. His writings exhibit the influence of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. (Desai, s.k., 1995)1 unlike other social realists like Premchand, Bhattacharya adopted a pedagogical approach to making novels out of ideas, utilizing satire and making his ideas more tangible through situational examples (chandrasekharan,K.R..1974)2

3) RESEARCH METHODOLOGY—

The thematic foundation of the study exposes and argues the existence of nationalistic period in Indian writing English. Gandhi and his ideology is the backdrop of this struggle for Indian independence, so that we can see his presence in various ways in the writings of these writers. Gandhiji's concern for social change, untouchability, swadeshi, the Indian caste system, class system, religion, education and status of women, the theme of hunger and poverty, India's struggle for Independence form the subject matter of one or the other short stories of these writers. However the theoretical and methodological basis of this research is connected to the most resent and accessible, bibliographical, review of the literature and the fully acknowledged and accepted worldwide contributions to the study of Nationalistic period and culture. The essential references of this study constitute the theoretical and critical contribution of R,K,Narayan, MulkRaj Anand, Raja Rao and Bhabani Bhattacharya's short stories.

4**) THESIS FREMEWORK. —**

The aim of the present thesis is to analyze the changes, differences, development and the appreciation of the thematic and technical characteristics of these writers in reference to the tumultuous times of Indian Independence struggle. It attempts to bring out the richness and density of the thought content, the narrative technique, the art of characterization, language and style and the distinct Indian scenario revealed in its depth. As a critical evaluation of the short fiction of these writers, this thesis tries to define the nature of their achievement as a story teller in relation to their times.

5) DATA FOR THE STUDY

a) R.K.Narayan has written more than four stories, they are included in the following collections Malgudi Days 1942,An Astrologer's Day and Other Stories 1947, Lawley Road and Other Stories 1956, A Horse and Two Goats 1970, Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories 1985, The Grandmother's Tale and Selected Stories 1994

b) Mulk Raj Anand has written more than seventy short stories which have been published in various collections entitled. The Lost Child and Other stories (1934), The Barbers Trade Union and Other Stories (1944), Corn Goddess and Other Stories (1947), Reflections on The Golden Bed and Other Stories (1953), The Power of Darkness and Other Stories (1959), Lajwanti and Other Stories (1966), and Between Tears and Laughter (1973). In addition, he has retold older Indian tales in two collections: Indian Fairy Tales (1946) and More Indian Fairy Tales (1961).

c) RAJA RAO collections of stories are, The Police Man and the Rose (1978) is a collection that includes some of the stories of The Cow of The Barricades and Other Stories and The Chess Master and His Moves (1988), On The Ganga Ghat (1989) is a collection of connected stories that presents realistic views of the permanent reality of Indian life.

d) BHABANI BHATTACHARY'S writing gives close attention to the social, political and historical processes which mark his personal background. His collections of short stories are, Indian Cavalcade (1948),and Steel Hawk (1968) ,Glory at Twilight, My Brave Great Uncle, The Acrobats, 'She, Born of Light.'

6) **Methodology Adopted**

The Methodology adopted by MLA handbook for writers of resource papers, Sixth Edition has been followed for the purpose of documentation, end notes, quotations and bibliography.

7) Plan of the study

The short story of Indian writer's, their writing career was exceptionally long encompassing seven decades. Their literary output is rich and varied. Their novels, short stories, memoires, travelogues and newspaper columns are part of it. R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya are transformed small and ordinary experiences of life into delightful memorable stories which provide us a glimpse of their fascinating world and reveal the ways of their writings.

This thesis presents four chapters, they are:

I. Introduction History of the Indian English Short Story
II. Life and works of writers
III. The Thematic Concerns of Writers
IV. Conclusion

Chapter I: Introduction History of the Indian English Short Story.

The introductory of opening chapter discusses the history of the Indian English short story. It provides a brief history of Indian English short story and literary background a brief synopsis of contemporary Indian-English Short Story: An overview. This chapter gives a brief discussion of 19th century nationalistic writers' details and publication of their stories. The chapter also includes the outline of thesis followed by the methodology. It discusses how the Indian English literature has come, its own and confines with common literature and their significant part of world literature. In English names of literature like Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Vikram Seth, Anita Desai and A. K Ramannajan would be familiar in literary circles whenever English literature is discussed. The general background provides a brief account of the nationalist writers and Nineteenth century writers' life and career. The short story writer's style and their writings in Indian literature, and it provide brief discussion of writing in their novels, fiction and dramas.

Chapter II: Life and works of writers

The second chapter discusses, R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya life and works. It provides a brief history and literary and a brief synopsis of Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya's novels dramas fiction and short story's critical analysis around them. The history and literary background provides a brief account of the authors' life and career, their style and pre-occupation and post-occupation with Indian English literature and their short stories, focusses mainly on Indian culture, economic backwardness of women, women characters of their suffering, gender bias in the society. Development of women from pre-independence to post-independence period, colonization and its impact on innocent women, suffering of the village folk as much as to expose the social evils and idiosyncrasies, oddities and weaknesses of human character, classification of social , moral realism, political resurgence and stories of metaphysical symbolism stories gives close attention to the social political and historical processes, stories reveals stories of poverty, religion, social and personal relationship. Short stories of R K Narayan's such as 'An Astrologers Day', 'Law ley Road' and 'A Horse and Two Goats', 'Cyclone and Other Stories', 'Under The Banyan Tree and Other Stories'. Mulk Raj Anand has written many stories from last forty years. His collections of stories are, The Lost Child and Other Stories 1934,The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories (1944), The Tractor and The Corn Goddess and Other Stories (1947). Raja Rao has written two collections of short stories, 1) The Cow of the Barricades 2) The Policeman and the Rose, total numbers of his short stories is twelve

Chapter III: The Thematic Concerns of Writers

The third chapter discusses about collection of short stories, themes regarding Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao (trinity) and Bhabani Bhattachary.

1st section will discuss about themes and critical analysis of R. K Narayan stories of relevance time and society the inborn humanism of Narayan's vision adds to his writing which is the secret of his universal appeal and enduring charm. Even the unpleasant side of life gets transmitted under the steady, warm gaze of this straight forward writer. The rituals, ceremonies, traditions and modes of the Indian life provide Narayan with unfailing sources of material.

1. The White Flower is a mild satire on the Hindu system of marriage, according to which the union of two hearts depends upon the matching of horoscopes or on the wishes of other people. Krishna, a student of B.A., falls in love with a girl. But their horoscopes do not match. Krishna's father has no faith in horoscopes, but the girl's father clings on to tradition. The matter is therefore referred to the priest of the temple who suggests that the decision be left to God. They gather in the temple and place two flowers, a red and a white one, before God. A child is to pick one of the two flowers. The red flower is for no and the white one for yes. The child picks the red flower and all accept this decision of God. Krishna is stunned and ―wished that he had it in his power to lighten all the flowers in the world‖ (Malgudi Days, 94). The story is a good example of Narayan's mixing of humour and pathos. There is grim irony in the title, as the red flower is not what Krishna wanted. The story has a strong autobiographical content. The horoscopes of Narayan and his wife did not match, and she died within four years of marriage. Narayan deals with this subject elaborately in his novel The Bachelor of Arts (1937), and also in the story ―The Seventh House‖ in A Horse and Two Goats (1970).
2. Love is the most important element or characteristic of human life. It has been the subject-matter of innumerable poets and writers. But strangely enough, Narayan does not deal with such a theme in his short stories. None of his characters is involved in love, in self-dramatization or disappointment. Perhaps the canvas of the short story is not broad for such portrayal. In the story "A Willing Slave" love is normal and non-impulsive. The Ayah meets her husband after a long time without excitement or much fuss. "A Willing Slave", story narrates the age-old husband-wife relationship in an Indian society. The husband, who was away in Ceylon for many years, suddenly comes back one day and claims his wife, who is working as an Ayah. She is entirely willing to go with him without raising any question about his disinterested and careless for so many years: "Three days later the Ayah stood before the lady of the house and saluted her "I can't tell his name", the Ayah said slyly -------Half an hour later she walked out of the house, led by a husband proud of his slave. "Narayan shows that in a tradition bound, Orthodox society like India, the Indian woman is a model of simplicity, devotion and love, she believes in complete give up to the life-long partner, whatever might be her suffering and tragic woes of life''.

2nd section will discuss about themes and critical analysis of Raja Rao stories of relevance time and society The Cow of the Barricades" presents a unique combination of symbol and reality – the cow being the symbol of the country's spirit- the incarnation of Bharat Mata and also an actual cow of mysterious nature at the same time. Gauri is a "Strange creature" in her ways and preferences. She was seen only on Tuesdays and refused the grain grass and rice – water gathered for her by the master's disciples and accepted only the handful of grain offered by the master who described her, among other thing, as "the great mothers vehicle" (PR, P.36). As such she assumed divine and miraculous properties for all those who sought fulfillment of their hopes and aspirations by touching her tail or by falling at her feet. A pure soul – "Compassionate and true" that she was, her very presence created the environment of

perfect harmony wherever she went and particularly in the Ashram of the Master who one fine morning" woke in his bed to hear the snake and rat playing under him for when the seeker finds harmony, the jackal and the deer and the rat and the serpent become friends" (PR, P. 37). The master is obviously a self- realized soul like Mahatma Gandhi – rather a local Gandhi like Moorthy in Kanthapura which is recalled to our minds through the description of the unity of Indian people under Gandhi's leadership and their fight against the British rulers. Quite like Kanthapura, the religious spirit of non-violence is powerfully combined with committed nationalism in "The Cow of the Barricades". When the people of the town began building barricade after barricade the master came and said; no barricades in the name of the Mahatma, for much blood will be spilt" (PR, P. 38) and seeing their enthusiasm he further warned them..….. There shall be no battle, brothers" (PR, P.39) yet, the whole situation remained stressed with terror and horror. Even Gauri – Include as a part of non-violence and truth – came every evening to the master and "looked very sad, and somebody had even seen a tear, clear as a drop of the Ganges, rundown her cheeks, for she was of sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings of others infinite and true.

The story presents not only the fight between the foreign ruler and the Indian subjects but also a fight between the two ways of winning the freedom- the violent and the non-violent. Failing to succeed upon the spirited freedom- fighters the master resigned from the president ship and sat in meditation so that the city might be saved from blood-shed. Finally Gauri herself appeared on the scene of a situation of angry disagreement between the forces of the rulers and the ruled, and her presence had such an effect upon both the workmen laid down their arms and the Indian soldiers from the other side joined her followers across the barricades crying "Victory to the Mahatma, Mahatma Gandhi ki jai". Gauri's daring journey ultimately ended in self-sacrifice as she was shot by the chief of the red-men and "She fell, a vehicle of God among lowly men" (PR, P.41). The barricades too become a symbol of division of Indians into followers of the rulers and the freedom fighters against them, both joined together by the inspiring figure of Gauri who herself becomes a type of the spirit of self-sacrifice sympathetic and non-violent, though remaining an unforgettable character in our memory.

3rd section will discuss about themes and critical analysis of Mulk Raj Anand stories of relevance time and society the last three stories in this section - The Tamarind Tree, The Silver Bangles and The Thief have one feature in common. They all are primarily studies in human psychology, though other elements such as social criticism, humanitarian concern for the suffering of others which are almost found everywhere in Anand's work are also present in them. In the Tamarind tree, Roopa, a young wife and hopeful mother cannot satisfy her longing to eat tamarind from her neighbour's tree, but a far greater disappointment for her is the sad realization that the fear of the elders and the weight of formality have made it impossible for her to communicate satisfactorily with her husband. Her plight is that "her inner impulses had always remained where they were incommunicable even to her man"[4]. This shares the story with noticeable psychological interest, though apparently true Roopa's tale would appear to be another variation on Anand's favorite theme viz…, the position of woman in traditional Hindu society. In a similar way, superficially viewed, the silver Bangles would appear to be a story on the usual theme of caste distinctions, but a closer investigation, brings to light a study in sexual jealousy. Here, a good-looking sweeper girl, who sports the silver bangles given to her on the occasion of her betrothal by her mother, is unjustly blamed by the lady of the house, of having stolen them. The poor girl is also warned seriously that 'Untouchables in the south are not supposed to wear silver at all'. As the ending of the story makes clear, the high caste lady of the house who is sexually frigid is actually jealous of the

attraction her husband feels for the sweeper girl, and is only looking for hiding place in her caste-superiority to hide her inferiority vis-à-vis the untouchable beauty.

4th section will discuss about themes and critical analysis of Bhabani Bhattachary stories of relevance time and society 'The Acrobats' is a subtle study in psychology. A father, who is a skilled acrobat, trains his motherless son in his profession. They give performances on the streets. The boy balances himself on a pole which is supported on the father's shoulder or in his open mouth; he skillfully turns his body on the top of the pole lying alternately on his back or on his belly. The performance is given again and again in front of a particular house. The boy looking down into his father's face notices that he is looking with longing eyes on a servant maid standing on a balcony. The next time they give the performance, the son takes revenge. In a disobedient mood, he relaxes his muscles intentionally on top of the pole, loses his balance and comes crashing down on the stone pavement. He luckily escapes death. The father learns his lesson and the acrobats are no more to be seen in this street. The story is told with great economy. The deep attachment between father and son, the sadness and jealousy felt by the boy and their common respect for the memory of the dead mother are brought out with breath-taking force.

Chapter IV: CONCLUSION

R.K. Narayan enjoys vast popularity today as one of the greatest writers of short stories. His distinctive contribution to the growth and development of English short story is well recognized both at the national and international level. His narrative skill makes him the most charming Indian English short story writer. Thus, he is a story – teller par excellence.

Narayan creates his comedy by engaging all the effective instruments of the humorist both traditional and innovative. His stories are rich in situations and incidents. There are occasional flashes of original farcical situations, as well as rare touches of satire too, imparting to his comic ability a wide spectrum... Mulk Raj Anand has written about India of yogis, sadhus and beggars and presented a true picture of the humorous conditions in our society. His stories dispassionately describe the inequality, poverty and exploitation of characters who are real individuals, sometimes grand, sometimes weak and thoroughly Indian. In Anand, Sense of rebellion and reform, of dejection and courage, combine to create works of art...Raja Rao's stories are important to his total vision of life, and are both thematically and technically connected with his novels. Like the novels the stories are a typical example of the Indian life and behaviour or views both at the social and the metaphysical planes, as of the Indian narrative in English he designs to develop gradually. Some of the short stories of Raja Rao, having a contemporary social and political appropriateness, are example of Indian life at the important plane even as the others, to revealing a metaphysical truth or to collecting a symbolic reality, contribute to the image of India at the metaphysical and the religious planes and obtain India's cultural past with its continuing crash upon the present customs conventions and attitudes. Bhattacharya is a realist who is keen on studying the realities of life. He has a sensitive understanding of the problems of contemporary Indian society. His detailed knowledge of Indian rural and urban life he is an outcome of his minute observation of the life of the common people.

Bhattacharya deals with the life and tensions of the poor and middle class people. His themes revolve round day-to-day life incidents and matters concerning the safety and security of the country. He does not deal with fairy-land figures or strange events or fantastic tales. In these

features he achieves supreme excellence. His novels do not present the intellectual and meta-physical ability of Raja Rao or the overall comic imagination of Narayan, but in his limited arena, Bhattacharya is a complete artist. Bhattacharya appeals to our senses his highly interesting and pleasing sketches.

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